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## Skills for Successful Meetings

**“Meetings are events in which people keep minutes and waste hours.”  
- Milton Berle**

Meetings can be wasteful, boring and unnecessary. Successful meetings can be great assets to the people involved. What makes the difference is how much planning, organizing and thought are invested in the meeting process.

### **Before the meeting:**

- The leader and all participants should know the purpose and type of the meeting, time and place, and the agenda or timetable. Allow for adequate time for participants to comment or make suggestions regarding the meeting's agenda, time, place, etc.
- Make sure that the meeting place has sufficient space to accommodate all, the temperature is right, and the needed equipment are available.
- The seating arrangement should fit the purpose of the meeting. For informative meetings, have participants face the front of the room. For decision making meetings have them face each other.

### **During the meeting:**

- Adhere to the beginning and ending times of the meeting. Once you establish a reputation of punctuality, participants will be punctual too.
- Stick to the issue being discussed, one issue at a time. If people digress, bring them back to the issue at hand.
- Do not allow interruptions from within or without.
- Don't allow individuals to dominate. All group members should have equal opportunity to participate.
- Recognize conflicts and steer away from strife by promoting understanding among the participants.
- Help the group come up with resolutions, action plans pertaining to the purpose of the meeting.
- Schedule a time and place for next meeting if needed.

### **After the meeting:**

- Send a memo to all participants summarizing the agreed upon points and action plans.
- Ask members to evaluate the meeting and to offer suggestions.
- Follow up on commitments, action plans, future meetings.